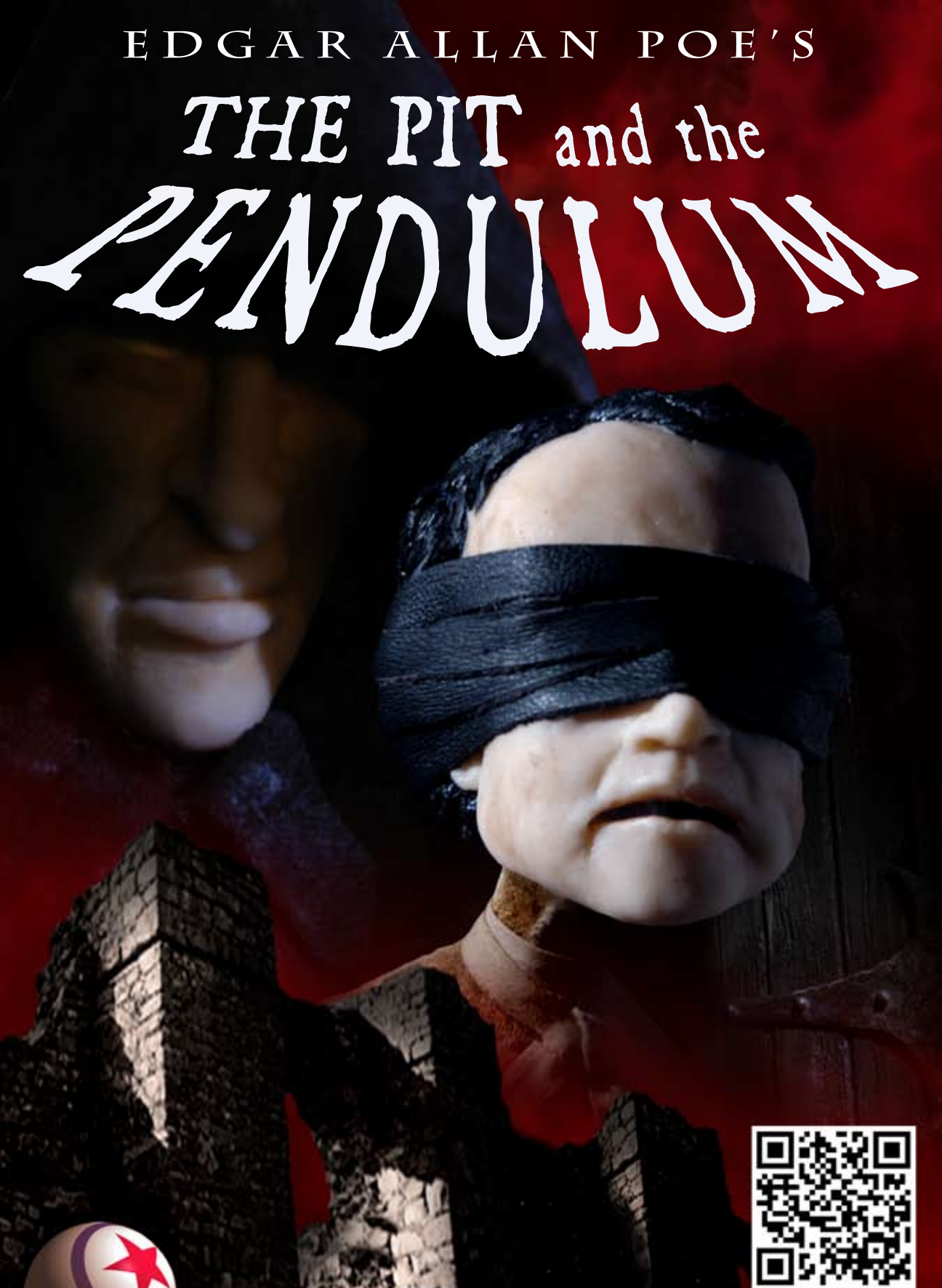
EDGAR ALLAN POE'S

# THE PIT and the PENDULUM



HAND MADE HEROES
FILM & TELEVISION

LIMITED DIGITAL
EDITION 2011

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# EDGAR ALLAN POE'S THE PIT and the PENDULUM

## LIMITED DIGITAL EDITION 2011

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|---|---|
| STORY | EDGAR ALLAN POE |
| ART DIRECTION | MARC LOUGEE |
| PRODUCER | SUSAN MA |
| LAYOUT | STEVE CHRISTOV |
| COVER ART | MARC LOUGEE |

HAND MADE HEROES
FILM & TELEVISION

Bravo!FACT

The Pit and the Pendulum film produced with a Bravo!FACT foundation to assist Canadian talent grant, supported by Bravo!NewStyleArtsChannel, a division of CHUM Limited

ONF NFB

The Pit and the Pendulum film produced with the support of NFB Filmmaker Assistance Program, Animation Studio

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IMPIA TORTORUM LONGOS HIS TURBA FURORES
SANGUINIS INNOCUI, NON SATIATA, ALUIT.
SOSPITE NUNC PATRIA, FRACTO NUNC FUNERIS ANTRO,
MORS UBI DIRA FUIT VITA SALUSQUE PATENT.
I WAS SICK...
SICK UNTO DEATH WITH
THAT LONG AGONY...
WHEN THEY AT LENGTH
UNBOUND ME, AND I WAS
PERMITTED TO SIT,
I FELT THAT MY
SENSES WERE LEAVING
ME, THE SENTENCE--
THAT DREAD SENTENCE
OF DEATH-- WAS THE
LAST DISTINCT ACCENTUATION
WHICH REACHED MY EARS.
AFTER THAT, THE
SOUND OF INQUISITIONAL
VOICES SEEMED MERGED
INTO ONE DREAMY
INDETERMINATE HUM.

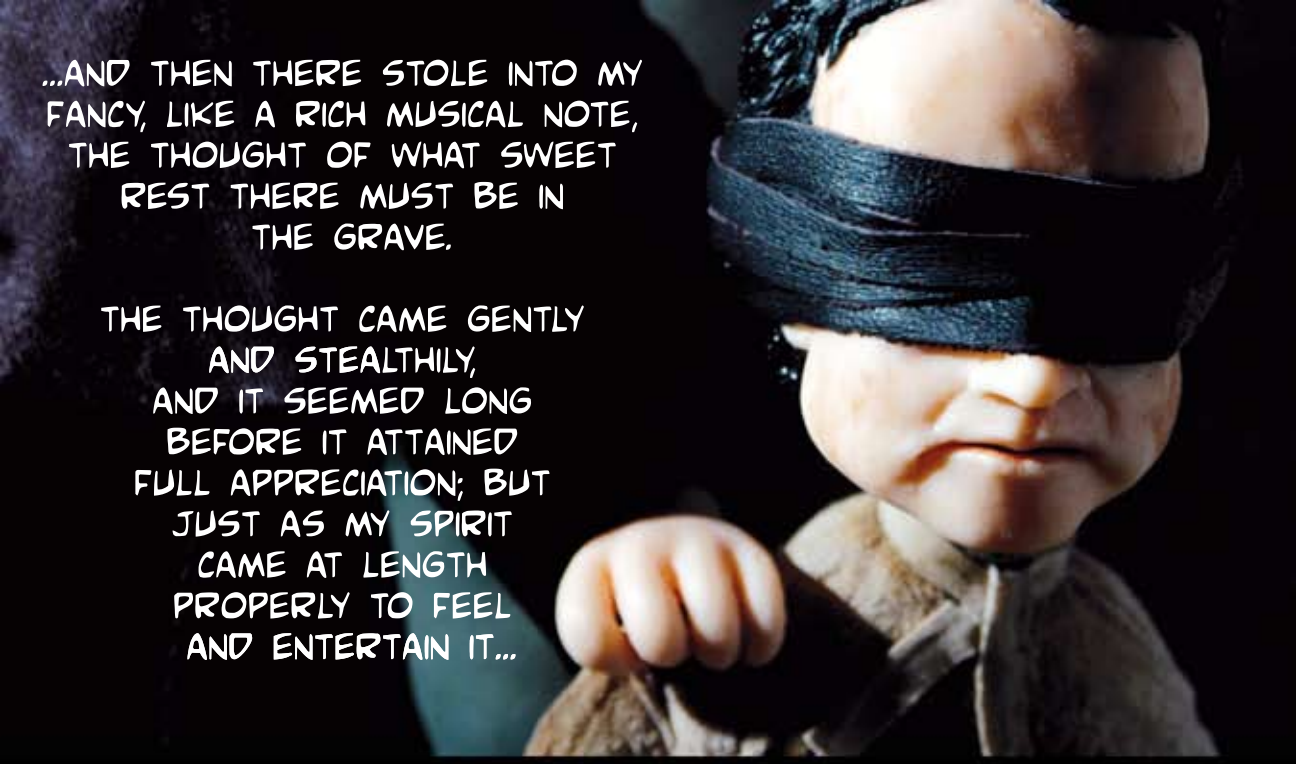
IT CONVEYED TO MY SOUL THE IDEA OF REVOLUTION-- PERHAPS FROM IT'S ASSOCIATION IN FANCY WITH THE BURR OF A MILL WHEEL.
THIS ONLY FOR A BRIEF PERIOD; FOR PRESENTLY I HEARD NO MORE.
I SAW THE LIPS OF THE BLACK-ROBED JUDGES. THEY APPEARED TO ME WHITE-- AND THIN EVEN TO GROTESQUENESS, THIN WITH THE INTENSITY OF THEIR EXPRESSION OF FIRMNESS--
OF IMMOVABLE RESOLUTION-- OF STERN CONTEMPT FOR HUMAN TORTURE.
BANG!
BANG!
BANG!

THE DECREES OF WHAT TO ME WAS FATE
WERE STILL ISSUING FROM THOSE LIPS.
I SHUDDERED BECAUSE
NO SOUND SUCCEEDED.
SEVEN TALL CANDLES STOOD UPON THE TABLE.
AT FIRST THEY WORE THE ASPECT OF CHARITY,
AND SEEMED WHITE AND SLENDER ANGELS
WHO WOULD SAVE ME;
BUT THEN, ALL AT ONCE, THERE CAME A MOST
DEADLY NAUSEA OVER MY SPIRIT...
WHILE THE ANGEL FORMS BECAME MEANINGLESS
SPECTRES, WITH HEADS OF FLAME.

VOS ES REPROBO IIT CARCER.
ILLIC VOS MOS SPECTO PORRO ANIMADVERTO OF VESTRI
TENTATIO QUOD RATIO OBVIAM VOS...

FROM THEM THERE WOULD BE NO HELP.
WHAT...?

BANG
BANG
BANG



THE FIGURES OF THE JUDGES VANISHED, AS IF MAGICALLY FROM BEFORE ME; THE TALL CANDLES SANK INTO NOTHINGNESS; THEIR FLAMES WENT OUT UTTERLY...

THE BLACKNESS OF DARKNESS SUPERVENED; ALL SENSATIONS APPEARED SWALLOWED UP IN A MAD RUSHING DESCENT AS OF THE SOUL INTO HADES.

I HAD SWOONED;

BUT STILL WILL NOT SAY THAT ALL CONSCIOUSNESS WAS LOST. WHAT OF IT THERE REMAINED I WILL NOT ATTEMPT TO DEFINE, OR EVEN TO DESCRIBE;

**YET ALL WAS NOT LOST.**

IN THE DEEPEST SLUMBER--NO!

IN DELIRIUM-- NO!

IN DEATH— NO!

**EVEN IN THE GRAVE...**
**ALL IS NOT LOST.**

AFTER THIS I CALL TO MIND FLATNESS AND DAMPNESS; AND THEN ALL IS MADNESS -- THE MADNESS OF A MEMORY WHICH BUSIES ITSELF AMONG FORBIDDEN THINGS.

**VERY SUDDENLY** THERE CAME BACK TO MY SOUL MOTION AND SOUND -- THE TUMULTUOUS BEATING OF MY HEART AND, IN MY EARS, THE SOUND OF IT'S BEATING.THEN A PAUSE IN WHICH ALL IS BLANK. THEN AGAIN SOUND, AND MOTION, AND TOUCH --A TINGLING SENSATION PERVADING MY FRAME. THEN THE MERE CONSCIOUSNESS OF EXISTENCE, WITHOUT THOUGHT -- A CONDITION THAT LASTED LONG.
THEN, VERY SUDDENLY, THOUGHT AND SHUDDERING TERROR, AND EARNEST ENDEAVOR TO COMPREHEND MY TRUE STATE. THEN A RUSHING REVIVAL OF SOUL AND A SUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO MOVE.AND NOW A FULL MEMORY OF THE TRIAL, OF THE JUDGES, OF THE SENTENCE, OF THE SICKNESS, OF THE SWOON. AT LENGTH, WITH WILD DESPERATION AT HEART,

*I QUICKLY UNCLOSED MY EYES.*

*THE BLACKNESS OF ETERNAL NIGHT ENCOMPASSED ME!*

I STRUGGLED FOR BREATH.

THE INTENSITY OF THE DARKNESS SEEMED TO OPPRESS ME AND STIFLE ME. I AT ONCE STARTED TO MY FEET, TREMBLING CONVULSIVELY IN EVERY FIBRE.

I FELT NOTHING; YET I DREADED TO MOVE A STEP...

...LEST I SHOULD BE IMPEDED BY THE WALLS OF A **TOMB.**

ALL WAS BLACKNESS AND VACANCY.
I BREATHED MORE FREELY.
IT SEEMED EVIDENT THAT MINE
WAS NOT, AT LEAST,
THE MOST HIDEOUS OF FATES.
WAS I LEFT TO PERISH OF STARVATION
IN THIS SUBTERANNEAN WORLD
OF DARKNESS; OR WHAT FATE,
PERHAPS EVEN MORE FEARFUL,
AWAITED ME?
THAT THE RESULT WOULD BE DEATH,
AND A DEATH OF MORE THAN
CUSTOMARY BITTERNESS. I KNEW
TOO WELL THE CHARACTER
OF THE JUDGES
TO DOUBT.
I PROCEEDED WITH
EXTREME CAUTION,
FOR THE FLOOR WAS
TREACHEROUS WITH SLIME.
I TOOK COURAGE,
AND DID NOT HESITATE
TO STEP FIRMLY;

THE PECULIAR SMELL OF DECAY AROSE TO MY NOSTRILS.

I SHUDDERED TO FIND THAT I HAD FALLEN AT THE BRINK OF A CIRCULAR PIT, WHOSE EXTENT OF COURSE, I HAD NO MEANS OF ASCERTAINING AT THE MOMENT...

THERE WAS THE CHOICE OF DEATH WITH IT'S DIRECT AGONIES, OR DEATH WITH IT'S MOST HIDEOUS MORAL HORRORS...
I SAW CLEARLY THE DOOM WHICH HAD BEEN PREPARED FOR ME.
I HAD BEEN RESERVED FOR THE LATTER.

ANOTHER STEP, AND THE WORLD HAD SEEN ME NO MORE.

THE DEATH JUST AVOIDED WAS OF THAT VERY CHARACTER WHICH I HAD REGARDED AS FABULOUS AND FRIVOLOUS IN THE TALES RESPECTING THE INQUISITION.

MY NERVES HAD BEEN UNSTRUNG

I TREMBLED AT THE THE SOUND OF MY OWN VOICE, AND HAD BECOME IN EVERY RESPECT A FITTING SUBJECT FOR THE SPECIES OF TORTURE THAT AWAITED ME.

SHAKING IN EVERY LIMB, I GROPED MY WAY BACK TO THE WALL; RESOLVING THERE TO PERISH RATHER THAN RISK THE TERRORS OF THE WELLS, OF WHICH MY IMAGINATION NOW PICTURED MANY IN VARIOUS POSITIONS ABOUT THE DUNGEON.

IN OTHER CONDITIONS OF MIND I MIGHT HAVE HAD COURAGE TO END MY MISERY AT ONCE BY A PLUNGE INTO ONE OF THESE ABYSSES;

BUT NOW I WAS THE VERIEST OF COWARDS.

NEITHER COULD I FORGET WHAT I HAD READ OF THESE PITS --

THE SUDDEN EXTINCTION OF LIFE FORMED NO PART OF THEIR MOST HORRIBLE PLAN.

KACK
THUNK
GLUG
GLUG
BURNING THIRST CONSUMED ME.
I EMPTED THE VESSEL AT A DRAUGHT.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN DRUGGED;
FOR SCARCELY HAD I DRUNK,
BEFORE I BECAME
IRRESISTBLY DROWSY.
A DEEP SLEEP FELL
UPON ME –
... A SLEEP LIKE THAT OF DEATH.

HOW LONG IT LASTED, I KNOW NOT--
BUT WHEN I UNCLOSED MY EYES, A WILD
SULPHUROUS LUSTER, THE ORIGIN
OF WHICH I COULD NOT AT FIRST
DETERMINE, ENABLED ME TO SEE
THE EXTENT AND ASPECT OF
THE PRISON.

WHAT I HAD TAKEN FOR MASONRY
SEEMED NOW TO BE IRON OR SOME
OTHER METAL, IN HUGE PLATES, WHOSE
SUTURES OR JOINTS OCCASIONED
THE DEPRESSION.

THE ENTIRE SURFACE
OF THIS METALLIC ENCLOSURE
WAS RUDELY DAUBED IN ALL
THE HIDEOUS AND REPULSIVE
DEVICES TO WHICH THE
CHARNEL SUPERSTITION
OF THE MONKS HAS
GIVEN RISE.

THE FIGURES OF
FIENDS IN ASPECTS OF
MENACE, WITH SKELETAL
FORMS, AND OTHER
MORE REALLY FEARFUL
IMAGES, OVERSPREAD
AND DISFIGURED THE WALLS.

IN THE CENTRE YAWNED THE
CIRCULAR PIT WHOSE JAWS I
HAD ESCAPED.

IT WAS THE ONLY ONE
IN THE DUNGEON.

I WAS SECURELY BOUND
BY A LONGSTRAP RESEMBLING
A SURCINGLE.

IT PASSED IN MANY CONVOLUTIONS
ABOUT MY LIMBS AND BODY,
LEAVING AT LIBERTY ONLY MY
HEAD, AND MY ARM TO SUCH
AN EXTENT THAT I COULD
SUPPLY MYSELF WITH FOOD
FROM AN EARTHEN DISH
ON THE FLOOR.

I SAW, TO MY HORROR,
THAT THE PITCHER HAD
BEEN REMOVED.

I SAY TO MY HORROR;
FOR I WAS CONSUMED WITH
AN INTOLERABLE THIRST.

I SURVEYED THE CEILING OF MY PRISON.

IN ONE OF IT'S PANELS A VERY SINGLULAR FIGURE, THAT OF *TIME* AS HE IS COMMONLY REPRESENTED, SAVE THAT, IN LIEU OF A SCYTHE HE HELD WHAT I PRESUMED TO BE THE PICTURED IMAGE OF...

**A HUGE PENDULUM...**

...SUCH AS WE SEE ON ANTIQUE CLOCKS. I FANCIED I SAW IT IN MOTION; IT'S SWEEP WAS BRIEF... *AND OF COURSE,* **SLOW.**

**I OBSERVED--**
WITH WHAT ***HORROR*** IT IS NEEDLESS TO SAY-- THAT IT WAS FORMED OF A CRESCENT OF GLITTERING STEEL, THE UNDER EDGE AS KEEN AS THAT OF A ***RAZOR.***
LIKE A RAZOR ALSO, IT SEEMED MASSY AND HEAVY, AND THE WHOLE HISSED AS IT SWUNG THROUGH THE AIR. I COULD NO LONGER DOUBT THE DOOM PREPARED FOR ME BY MONKISH INGENUITY IN ***TORTURE.***
I KNEW THAT SURPRISE, OR ENTRAPMENT INTO TORTURE, FORMED AN IMPORTANT PORTION OF ALL THE GROTESQUERIE OF THESE DUNGEON ***DEATHS.***

EVEN AMID THE AGONIES OF THAT PERIOD, THERE RUSHED TO MY MIND A HALF-FORMED THOUGHT OF JOY-- OF **HOPE.**

***YET, WHAT BUSINESS HAD I WITH HOPE?***
DOWN STILL UNCEASINGLY-- STILL INEVITABLY DOWN!
I SHRUNK CONVULSIVELY AT IT'S EVERY SWEEP. IT WAS HOPE-- THE HOPE THAT TRIUMPHS ON THE RACK-- THAT WHISPERS TO THE DEATH-CONDEMNED EVEN IN THE DUNGEONS OF ***THE INQUISITION.***

FOR MANY HOURS THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF THE LOW FRAMEWORK UPON WHICH I LAY, HAD BEEN LITERALLY *SWARMING WITH RATS...*

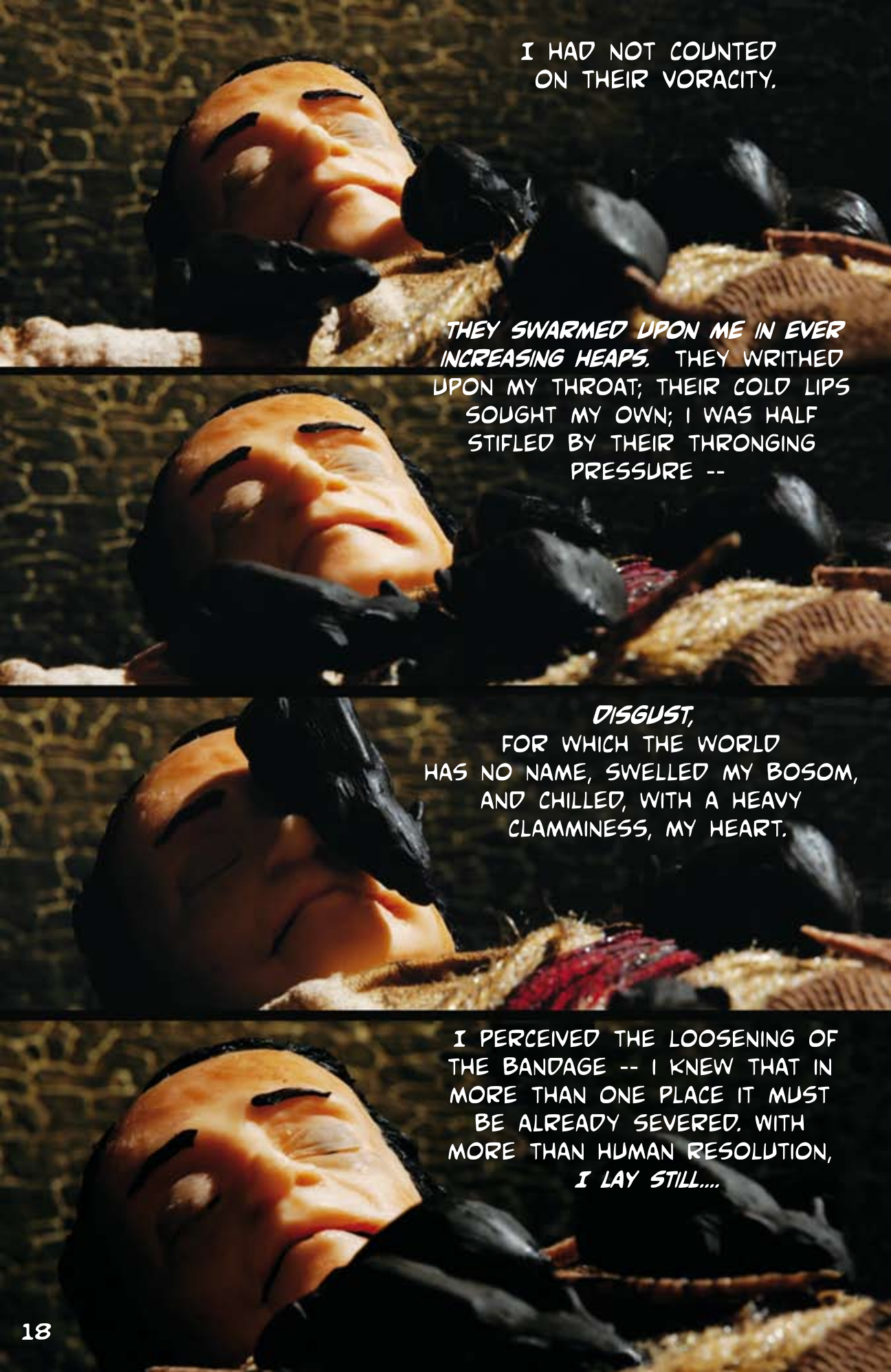
THEY WERE WILD, BOLD, RAVENOUS...THEIR RED EYES GLARING UPON ME AS IF THEY WAITED BUT FOR MOTIONLESSNESS ON MY PART TO MAKE ME THEIR PREY...

"TO WHAT FOOD," I THOUGHT, "HAVE THEY BEEN ACCUSTOMED IN THE WELL"?

IN THEIR VORACITY THE VERMIN FREQUENTLY FASTENED THEIR SHARP FANGS IN MY FINGERS.

WITH THE PARTICLES OF OILY AND SPICY VIAND WHICH NOW REMAINED, I THOROUGHLY RUBBED THE BANDAGE WHEREVER I COULD REACH IT, THEN, RAISING MY HAND FROM THE FLOOR--

*I LAY PERFECTLY STILL...*


I HAD NOT COUNTED ON THEIR VORACITY.
THEY SWARMED UPON ME IN EVER INCREASING HEAPS. THEY WRITHED UPON MY THROAT; THEIR COLD LIPS SOUGHT MY OWN; I WAS HALF STIFLED BY THEIR THRONGING PRESSURE --
DISGUST, FOR WHICH THE WORLD HAS NO NAME, SWELLED MY BOSOM, AND CHILLED, WITH A HEAVY CLAMMINESS, MY HEART.
I PERCEIVED THE LOOSENING OF THE BANDAGE -- I KNEW THAT IN MORE THAN ONE PLACE IT MUST BE ALREADY SEVERED. WITH MORE THAN HUMAN RESOLUTION, I LAY STILL....

THE MOMENT OF ESCAPE HAD ARRIVED!
AT A WAVE OF MY HAND, MY DELIVERERS HURRIED TUMULTUOUSLY AWAY-- I SLID FROM THE EMBRACE OF THE BANDAGE AND BEYOND THE REACH OF THE SCIMITAR!
SSSSHHAAAAWWGGGG

FREE! --AND IN THE GRASP OF THE INQUISITION! THE HELLISH MACHINE CEASED AND I BEHELD IT DRAWN UP, BY SOME INVISIBLE FORCE, THROUGH THE CEILING. MY EVERY MOTION WAS UNDOUBTEDLY WATCHED.
FREE! -- I HAD ESCAPED DEATH IN ONE FORM OF AGONY, TO BE DELIVERED UNTO WORSE THAN DEATH IN SOME OTHER.
I BECAME AWARE, FOR THE FIRST TIME,OF THE ORIGIN OF THE SULPHUROUS LIGHT WHICH ILLUMINATED THE CELL.
DEMON EYES, OF A WILD AND GHASTLY VIVACITY, GLARED UPON ME IN A THOUSAND DIRECTIONS, WHERE NON HAD BEEN VISIBLE BEFORE, AND GLEAMED WITH THE LURID LUSTRE OF A FIRE THAT I COULD NOT FORCE MY IMAGINATION TO REGARD AS UNREAL.
UNREAL! EVEN WHILE I BREATHED THERE CAME TO MY NOSTRILS THE BREATH OF THE VAPOUR OF HEATED IRON!
I GASPED FOR BREATH! THERE COULD BE NO DOUBT OF THE DESIGN OF MY TORMENTORS --

I SHRANK FROM THE GLOWING METAL TO THE EDGE OF THE CELL. AMID THE THOUGHT OF THE FIERY DESTRUCTION THAT IMPENDED...

THE IDEA OF THE COOLNESS OF THE WELL CAME OVER MY SOUL LIKE A BALM. *I RUSHED TO IT'S DEADLY BRINK.*

*OH! HORROR! OH! ANY HORROR BUT THIS!* THE INQUISITORIAL VENGEANCE HAD BEEN HURRIED BY MY TWO-FOLD ESCAPE, AND THERE WAS TO BE NO MORE DALLYING WITH THE **KING OF HORRORS!**

"DEATH", I SAID, "ANY DEATH BUT THAT OF THE PIT!"

*FOOL!* MIGHT I HAVE NOT KNOWN THAT INTO THE PIT WAS THE OBJECT OF THE BURNING IRON TO URGE ME? AT LENGTH FOR MY SEARED AND WRITHING BODY THERE WAS NO LONGER AN INCH OF FOOTHOLD ON THE FIRM FLOOR OF THE PRISON.

AAAA

THERE WAS A DISCORDANT HUM OF HUMAN VOICES! THERE WAS A LOUD BLAST AS OF MANY TRUMPETS!
THERE WAS A HARSH GRATING AS OF A THOUSAND THUNDERS! THE FIERY WALLS RUSHED BACK!
AN OUTSTRETCHED ARM CAUGHT MY OWN AS I FELL, FAINTING, INTO THE ABYSS.
IT WAS THAT OF GENERAL LASALLE.

THE FRENCH ARMY HAD ENTERED TOLEDO.
THE INQUISITION WAS...
IN THE HANDS OF IT'S ENEMIES!

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